

Vacating the Premises:

39th & 4th Avn. BDEs Oust Insurgents

By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel

122nd MPAD

AL-RASHIDA, Iraq- On the morning of April 23, elements of the 1st Cavalry Division moved into the former presidential-island retreat of Al-Rashida. The mission was to secure the area and remove the enemy from the island.

"Some of the fire we've taken [on Camp Cooke] has originated from (Al-Rashida)," said Capt. Brian Mills, of Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Cav. Div. "Our objective [was] to find anti-coalition weapons caches, to deny the enemy this location, and show the enemy we are able to conduct operations to get anti-coalition Forces."

On the island sits a dilapi-
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By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

Troopers of Headquarters Company, 2-7 Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division provide security on the island bridge during a cordon and search operation at the presidential retreat island and compound of Al-Rashida April 23.

Strange Hail Storm Surprises Victory, BIAP

By Spc. Andy Miller

122nd MPAD

An uncommon hailstorm smacked the tents, trailers and buildings of Camp Victory and Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) around 9:15 p.m. April 30. The hail was the consequence of a super cell thunderstorm that rolled through the area during the evening. Minor damage to communications antennas and contractor non-tactical vehicles was reported.

Pfc. Will Escoto, from 1st Cavalry Division's forward support company, was in his trailer writing a letter to his

mother when the storm passed through.

"I thought I was getting hit by rounds at first, but suddenly it started hitting hard I could tell [it was hail]," Escoto said.

"I'm used to it back at home."

A few minutes after the hail stopped, Escoto, a Brownsville, Texas native, went outside to find his plastic lawn chair severely damaged.



By Spc. Andy Miller, 122nd MPAD

Handfuls of golf-ball-sized hail pelted Camp Victory and Baghdad International Airport April 30 as a super cell thunderstorm moved through the area.

Other Victory North Soldiers noticed dents in the sides of their trailers. There were no reported injuries from the hail.

Having a thunderstorm in Iraq is normal for this season, according to Air Force Master Sgt. Joseph Nichols Jr., 9th Expeditionary Air Support Operations Squadron attached to First Team. But the more severe kind of thunderstorm that produces hail is a rare occurrence, he said.

"The large hail that we had last night is usually from a super cell thunderstorm, and

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Coalition Forces Remove Squatters from Al-Rashida

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dated palace that houses Iraqi squatters and insurgents who have been attacking the Army camp with rockets and mortars. Combined elements of the 39th and 4th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) set the operation in motion. The only way onto the island was through a single bridge, but the Soldiers were prepared.

Early that morning, the Soldiers from Echo Troop, 151st Cavalry, 39BCT, established an outer cordon, and immediately began taking enemy fire. Returning fire, the engagement was quickly squelched and the operation continued as planned.

With a large land area to search and access limited to the solitary bridge, 2nd Battalion 227th Aviation Regiment, 4BCT used helicopters to deliver two additional 39BCT platoons to the southeast area of the island.

The Soldiers knew there was the possibility for enemy attack, but they were ready to get the insurgents and their weapons.

"Potentially, there [was] a large concentration of enemy forces and weapons caches located on Al-Rashida," said Sgt. 1st Class Michael McClellan, a brigade battle

non-commissioned officer of 39BCT.

A one-foot-thick reinforced-concrete wall surrounded the presidential compound, which would make the mission more challenging. On the other side of the wall, forces navigated a dirt path lined with tall, dense vegetation before reaching the palace grounds.

Then the rest of the Soldiers hit the island with force as they used their Abrams tanks to smash through the

thick concrete barrier. Their Bradley fighting vehicles rolled down the narrow dirt path and HHC, 2-7 Cav. established the inner cordon, effectively handing the squatters their eviction notice.

Five hours later, the presidential compound and island of Al-Rashida had been completely searched and the coalition forces returned to their established rallying point.

The operation was complete. The island was clear and

the squatters had been removed from the palace. Although the search didn't yield a large cache of insurgent weapons, the brigade battle captain was pleased.

"While it is disappointing that we didn't find all that we had hoped," said Maj. Steven Lachola, brigade battle captain, 39BCT. "I think we successfully showed that we are willing to use all assets at hand to stop enemy engagements."



By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

Pfc. Luke Finely a medic for Headquarters Company, 2-7 Cav., 1st Cav. Div. treats the injured toe of a little boy during Operation Yellow Stone, a cordon and search operation April 23. The little boy and his father were living on the island of Al-Rashida when Coalition Forces secured the area as part of the operation.

Have Package - Will Deliver

Have a package to mail home? Need a money order? You're in luck! The new Victory North APO is up and fully operational. (located next to the new Division Chapel)

Hours of operation: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m to 5 p.m., Saturday - Sunday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Isolated Hail Storm Startles Soldiers

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they are rare, especially in this part of the world," Nichols said. "You have to have a very strong updraft that pushes all the moisture high above the freezing level. The moisture goes above the freezing level it freezes into little balls, and it gets too heavy and it falls back down. It picks up more moisture and it gets pushed back up to the freezing level several times, until it gets so big that it can't be held aloft by the winds, and that is when it starts falling."

The hail produced by this thunderstorm was reportedly isolated to Camp Victory and BIAP. Chalk it up as an out-of-the-ordinary event, with the brunt of it witnessed almost exclusively by First Team Soldiers on Camp Victory.

"I was in my room trying to sleep and all of a sudden it was like ting.. ting.. ting.. I thought it was a machine gun going off over my trailer," Spc. Jeremiah Burch, a legal specialist for Headquarters Co., 1st Cav. Div. said. "It was crazy."

Today in Cav History

1951 - Second patrol base was assigned to be of Regimental size and the mission given to 7th Cavalry Regiment.

1966 - Operation MOSBY ends.

1966 - Operation LEWIS AND CLARK begins.



► All Dressed Up and Ready to Go



Temple Daily Telegram

Complete with rain parka and beret, Chandler Comacho, 4, peers up into an airplane at the Central Texas Air Show in Temple, Texas April 30. A portion of the weekend's proceeds will go to Fort Hood's Morale, Welfare and Recreation program in support of families who have lost loved ones in Iraq.

'Operation Homelink' Helps Connect Families

► From Killeen Daily Herald

KILLEEN, Texas—Families of Fort Hood Soldiers have another avenue to stay in touch with loved ones deployed overseas.

Dell today joined forces with Operation Homelink, a non-profit organization with a goal to provide refurbished computers to the parents and spouses of junior enlisted, deployed service men and women at no cost.

The company will donate 100 refurbished notebook computers to enable family members at Fort Hood to e-mail those deployed outside of the

continental United States.

"Being able to connect with your family while being deployed helps maintain and sustain a Soldier's morale, and technology makes that possible today," said Frank Miller, vice president of operations for Dell's public sector and former Major General, United States Army. "Dell believes that no computer should go to waste, and we're glad to see Operation Homelink put these systems to good use."

Operation Homelink accepts donations of qualified end-of-life computers from corporations, and the group depends on corporate donations

to keep up with increasing demand. For more information on requirements and how corporations can donate, visit www.operationhomelink.org. "Because of Dell's generosity, 100 more families will soon be communicating faster and more easily with their loved ones," said Dan Shannon, founder and president of Operation Homelink. "There are thousands more who qualify for the program; however, we can not keep up with demand. With about 2,500 qualified military families waiting to receive computers, we hope that other companies will follow Dell's lead and provide their retired systems to our cause."

Monday

High: 93 Low: 71



Tuesday

High: 92 Low: 67



Wednesday

High: 91 Low: 64



Today in History

May 3

► From historychannel.com

1863 Confederates take Hazel Grove at Chancellorsville
 1937 Margaret Mitchell's novel, *Gone With the Wind*, wins the Pulitzer Prize
 1942 The Battle of the Coral Sea begins
 1946 Japanese war crimes trial begins
 1947 New Japanese Constitution enacted
 1951 Congressional hearings on Gen. MacArthur
 1952 Fletcher lands on the North Pole
 1960 The musical comedy *The Fantasticks* (the longest running musical of all time) opens in an off-Broadway playhouse
 1965 173rd Airborne Brigade deployed to South Vietnam
 1991 Last episode of *Dallas* airs

Duncan, Spurs Beat Lakers 88-78

► From AP

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—The Los Angeles Lakers had a fourth-quarter plan: get the ball inside to Shaquille O'Neal. The San Antonio Spurs answered with a better idea: get the ball outside to Tim Duncan.

Duncan scored 12 of his 30 points in the final period, including three consecutive jumpers in a decisive 10-0 run, as the Spurs came back for an 88-78 win over the Lakers in Game 1 of their second-round playoff series Sunday.

Los Angeles, leading 65-62 after three, committed 10 turnovers and scored only 13 points in the fourth quarter, being held without a field goal for a six-minute span.

"We tried to force-feed Shaq, and they got four or five turnovers out of that that helped them get back into the game," Lakers coach Phil Jackson said. "By and large, we were victims of our own inability to execute."

The win was the Spurs' 16th in a row since late March. Game 2 in the best-of-seven series is Wednesday night.

The Lakers led by five early in the fourth, but a 24-9 game-ending run propelled the Spurs to an 88-78 win in Game 1 Sunday.



San Antonio Spurs point guard Tony Parker scored 20 points and provided nine assists in the first game of Round 2 of the NBA playoffs.



Major League Baseball Standings

as of 05/02/04

American League East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	15	8	.652	-
New York	14	11	.560	2
Baltimore	12	10	.545	2.5
Tampa Bay	8	15	.348	7
Toronto	8	17	.320	8

Central Division

Minnesota	15	9	.625	-
Chicago	15	9	.600	-
Detroit	13	12	.520	2.5
Cleveland	10	13	.435	4.5
Kansas City	7	16	.304	7.5

West Division

Texas	15	9	.625	-
Anaheim	15	10	.600	.5
Oakland	12	13	.480	3.5
Seattle	9	16	.360	6.5

National League East Division

Florida	15	9	.625	-
Atlanta	12	12	.500	3
Philadelphia	11	12	.478	3.5
New York	10	15	.400	5.5
Montreal	6	20	.231	10

Central Division

Houston	15	9	.625	-
Chicago	14	10	.583	1
Pittsburgh	12	11	.522	2.5
St. Louis	13	12	.520	2.5
Cincinnati	12	12	.500	3
Milwaukee	12	13	.480	3.5

West Division

Los Angeles	15	9	.625	-
San Diego	16	10	.615	-
Colorado	11	13	.458	4
San Francisco	11	14	.440	4.5
Arizona	10	14	.417	5

Glossary W: Wins, L: Losses, PCT: Winning Percentage, GB: Games Behind



NBA PLAYOFFS

New Orleans 89
 Miami 83
 (Series tied 3-3)

San Antonio 88
 Los Angeles 78
 (San Antonio leads series 1-0)

TV GUIDE

	AFN ATLANTIC	AFN PACIFIC	AFN Sports	AFN Spectrum
18:00	I Spy/ Even Stevens	The Tonight Show with Jay Leno/ The Late Show with David Letterman	Baseball Tonight	Trekkies 17:00
19:00	Jeopardy/ Headline News	Access Hollywood 19:30	SPORTSCENTER	The Wild Thornberrys/ The Fairly Oddparents
20:00	ESPNews/ Headline News	Go For Broke	ESPNews 20:30	The Simpsons/ The Cosby Show
21:00	60 Minutes	Iceman 21:45	MLB - Chicago Cubs @ St. Louis Cardinals	Average Joe
22:00	Cold Case			Whose Line Is It Anyway? 22:30